

June 19, 2019

The Honorable Jared Huffman  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom McClintock  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Martha McSally  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Huffman and McSally and Ranking Members McClintock and Cortez Masto:

On behalf of the Pathfinder Irrigation District, I write in support of the reauthorization of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (Program) and the companion Platte River Recovery Implementation Authorization bills (H.R. 3237 and S. 990). The Pathfinder District provides irrigation water from the North Platte River to over 115,000 acres of land in Eastern Wyoming and Western Nebraska, as part of the Bureau of Reclamation's North Platte Project. The very successful Platte River Recovery Implementation Program provides compliance with the Endangered Species Act for the District and its water users avoiding an onerous regulatory approach.

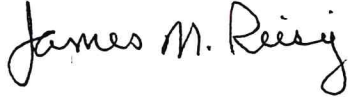
The Pathfinder Irrigation District has worked with multiple partners for more than a decade to successfully implement the Program, a partnership that provides benefits for four threatened and endangered species in the central and lower Platte River basin while allowing existing water use to continue and new upstream water development to proceed. The Program is an outstanding example of a proactive, collaborative approach to providing benefits for endangered species and their habitats while allowing for the beneficial use of water.

This good work needs to continue, both for the benefit of the species and our economy. That is why the Pathfinder Irrigation District endorses the reauthorization of the Program. This legislation will extend the current work for another 13 years, continuing the restoration and protection of habitat for the whooping crane, least tern, piping plover, and pallid sturgeon. During the first 13 years of the Program, 196 water use projects were approved with streamlined Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance consultations, reducing the regulatory burden on our water users.

The Program functions as the reasonable and prudent alternative for ESA compliance regarding the four target species. The Program provides far-reaching benefits for the three basin states and their water users, including major irrigation water supplies in Nebraska, compliance for operation of four federal reservoirs in Wyoming, and providing drinking water for all major water supply projects in Colorado's booming

Front Range. The Program is a national model for collaborative solutions to common problems and provides ESA compliance for the three Platte River basin states. We hope you will support the reauthorization of this important Program.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James M. Reisig". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James M. Reisig, President  
Pathfinder Irrigation District

CC: Chairman Raúl M. Grijalva, Committee on Natural Resources  
Ranking Member Rob Bishop, Committee on Natural Resources  
Chair Lisa Murkowski, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Ranking Member Manchin, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, Nebraska 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Rep. Don Bacon, Nebraska 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Rep. Adrian Smith, Nebraska 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Sen. Deb Fischer, Nebraska  
Sen. Ben Sasse, Nebraska